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# Tulse, Mayor.

*Martis 4. die Junii, 1684. Anno-  
que Regni Regis Caroli Secundi,  
Angliæ, &c. xxxvi.*

**T**His Court doth desire the Reverend Dr. *Sprat*, Dean of *Westminster*, to Print his Sermon preached at *Bow-Church* on the 29<sup>th</sup> of *May* last, before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, and Citizens of this City.

*Wagstaff.*

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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the  
RIGHT HONOURABLE  
Sir Henry Tulse,  
LORD MAYOR,  
And the COURT of  
ALDERMEN,

And the CITIZENS of the  
CITY of L O N D O N,

On *MAY* the 29th. 1684.

Being the Anniversary-day of His Majesty's  
Birth, and happy Return to his Kingdoms.

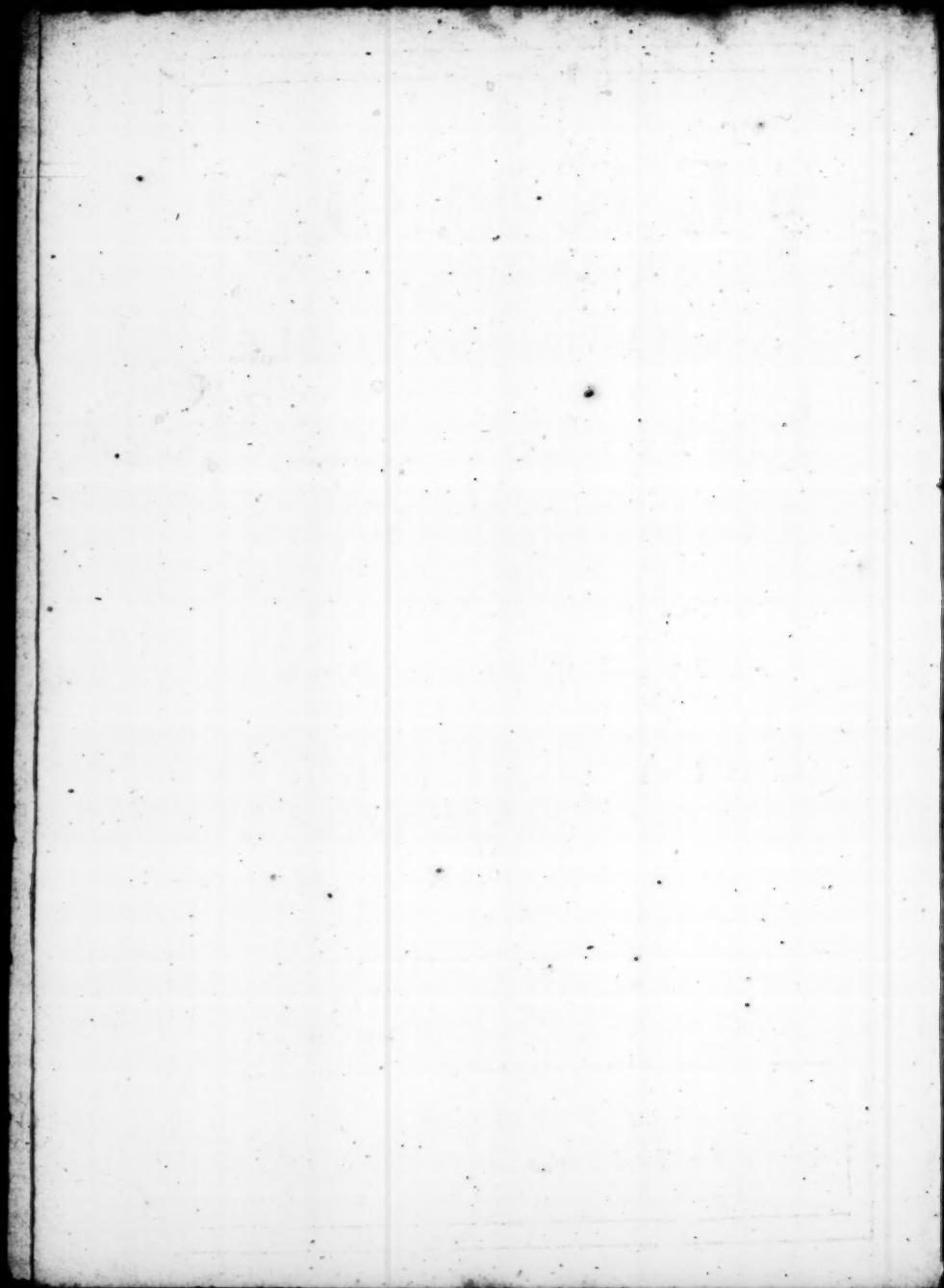
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By *THO. SPRAT*, D.D. Dean of *Westminster*,  
One of His Majesty's Chaplains in Ordinary.

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L O N D O N,

Printed for *Jacob Tonson*, at the *Judge's Head* in  
*Chancery-lane*, near *Fleet-street*. 1684.





(1)

A

# SERMON

Preached before the

Lord Mayor,

May the 29th. 1684.

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PSALM 130. 4.

*There is mercy with thee: therefore shalt  
thou be feared.*

So our Old Translation.

*There is forgiveness with thee, that thou  
mayst be feared.*

So King James's Bible.

**B**Y comparing this twofold reading of  
these words, we find, the blessings of  
God declared in my Text, were very  
like the double benefit, our Countrey recei-  
ved

## *A Sermon Preached before*

ved from Heaven on this day: both ways extraordinary, and most auspicious: whether we consider it, as a *mercy*, in the King's Birth; or as a *forgiveness*, in his glorious return.

And, to make this Scripture yet more applicable to our present purpose, the inspired Penman of this Psalm appears in the beginning of it, to have been in the same deplorable state, these Nations were in for many years before the second of these two most happy days.

- Verf. 1. *Out of the depths he had cried to the Lord. Depths*, no doubt of the greatest Temporal afflictions, and Spiritual desertions. Then
- Verf. 2. he cried, *Lord hear my voice: Let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.* Then, with a deep sense of shame, and remorse for what was past, he acknowledg'd,
- Verf. 3. *If thou Lord shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?* So devoutly he cried, so passionately bewail'd his former rebellions against Heaven, never ceasing to implore pardon for them, till he had found by comfortable experience, *that there is mercy, and forgiveness with God.*
- Verf. 4.

A perfect image this of these three Kingdoms calamities, I may say, of our guilt, before

before this blessed day of Restoration; and of our deliverance from the calamities, our indemnity from the guilt, by means of this day.

*Out of our depths* also we had cried to the Lord. *Depths*, if ever any were, of miseries, and distractions in Church and State. We then either did, or should have confess'd, that if God, or the King *had mark'd iniquities* against God, or the King, few, or none could have stood. When, by an adorable Providence, the remaining Loyal part of the Nation, who had long *cried to the Lord* for this day, found inexpressible *mercy* upon it: nay the very disloyal part, who had *cried to the Lord* too, but against it, even they enjoyed an unparallel'd *forgiveness* by it.

Thus far the Psalmist's case, and ours were alike; in our distresses; in our recoveries. 'Twere well for us, if the resemblance between him, and us, would hold out so to the end. For after he had been thus oppress'd on Earth, and relieved from Heaven, how did he behave himself? He never forgot, strove never to forfeit, presently made the best use of all this mercy, and forgiveness: declared not onely what was after-

## A Sermon Preached before

terwards said of *Mary Magdalen*, that he *loved much*, but that he *fear'd much*, because much had been *forgiven* him.

And thenceforth accordingly resolves, that

Verf. 5. *by waiting for the Lord, with a stedfast hope in*

Verf. 6. *his word : by waiting for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning ; he will lay hold*

Verf. 7. *on the plenteous redemption, that is with him ; who is not onely able to redcem, but shall*

Verf. 8. *redeem Israel from all his iniquities : as, with a full assurance of faith, he concludes the Psalm.*

It would be, I doubt, but a very melancholy inquiry, an employment fitter for a day of Humiliation, than for so great a Festival: Should we go strictly to examine, whether we, the people of these Nations, have made the Psalmist's practice our Example? Sure I am, it was, and is still our bounden duty so to doe: A duty incumbent on us all the days of our lives: especially on these days of our solemn Thanksgivings.

Then, my dear Brethren, we rejoice the best way for *mercy*, and *forgiveness* received from God, and God's Representative the King; when we embrace the *forgiveness* so, as to take more care of not offending in the like

like kind for the future: when we remember the *mercies* so, as not to surfeit our selves with the fruits of them; so, as not onely to applaud the Divine Authour of them with empty words, and praises: but when we make our joy solid, and lasting; when we mingle it not with levity, or vanity, too incident to those that are over-joy'd, but with the cheerfull gravity, the easie severity of a Christian life: And so we doe, when we temper our joy with *fear*, a true *fear* of God.

The words of my Text have a plain meaning, but a doubtfull expression, both in our *own*, and in the learned Languages.

There is mercy, or forgiveness, *with thee*, <sup>μετ' σου</sup> or in thee, from thee, round about thee: in his incomprehensible essence: in all the Attributes of his Divinity: in his very wrath there is a long-suffering: in his very revenge there is a forbearing mercy. So essential is mercy to him; so widely spreading from him; so, upon all accounts, *with him*, not onely that he may be admired, or worship'd, much less that He may be neglected, or presumed upon, but *that thou mayst be feared*.

*There*

# A Sermon Preached before

ἐν τῇ  
ἐκκλησίᾳ  
τῇ

*There is mercy with thee*, because of thy Name: So the Septuagint. His Nature is mercifull. His Name is agreeable to his Nature. He is a God of mercies, and forgivenesses, abundant in goodness, as in truth, in both infinite.

διὰ τὴν  
νόμον.

*There is mercy with thee*, because of thy Law: So another reading of the words. And it is well for us sinfull creatures, that there is so: that God has a Mercy, as well as a Law; that he has forgiveness, because of that Law: that the sweetness of his mercy is answerable to the exactness of his Law: that the tenderness of his forgiveness far exceeds all our obstinate breach of his Law, else no flesh living could be justified in his sight.

But both our Translations render it nearer the Original: *That thou mayst be fear'd*; so the New: *therefore shalt thou be fear'd*; so the Old Bible. The first signifying the Psalmist's unfeigned acknowledgment of his duty: the second containing his firm intention, and vow to perform it.

So that the words thus explain'd may be summ'd up in two parts.

1<sup>st</sup>, The great foundation of this whole discourse: *the mercy, the forgiveness, that is with God.*

2<sup>dly</sup>, The

2dly, The great obligation of special dependence, and service, those *mercies* lay upon us, to *fear* the onely Donor of them all.

From which general Contemplation of the mercies of God, and their principal design, it will be our next business to bring our thoughts nearer home, to the great end of this days particular *mercy*. Particular! it was an Universal *mercy*. And if we shall find it to have been so; that the favour in it on God's part towards us, was here at least as much, as there it could be to the Psalmist: then what can we doe less on our part; but to imitate his steady resolution of *fearing* God? And in order to that, continually *to wait for the Lord, to hope for him* in his own way, the way of his own Word, and Church: to wait for him more than they that watch for the morning: even more than we once watch'd, and wish'd for the morning of this day.

My first particular is that, which the Psalmist justly makes the ground of his whole argument: the *mercy, and forgiveness, that is with God.*

The



The inexhaustible Love of God to Mankind, as it is the chief subject of the written word of God, and the very end, for which it was all written; so it is that, on which the Holy Scripture, the New Testament especially, and this Book of *Psalms*, one of the most Gospel-like parts of the Old Testament, does more vary its expressions, and in which the Holy Ghost seems more delighted to enlarge it self, than on any other divine matter whatsoever.

Throughout the whole Bible, we find it represented to us by many the most significant phrases, similitudes, and amplifications.. It is often here resembled to the greatest degrees of kindness, which we behold in the sublunary World. Sometimes it is compar'd to the natural tenderness for their young, of those creatures, that are onely guided by the motions, and inclinations of Sense. Sometimes it is likened to the higher, and better directed affections of Mankind: to the sympathy, and endearments of a friend, to the provident care, and indulgence of a Father, to the soft passions, and yearnings of a Mother.

And all these coming infinitely short, as needs they must: For how can Earth, or frail



frail mortality supply examples, or imaginations large, or tender enough to set forth to us the heavenly compassions? from thence the Scripture carries our thoughts into Heaven it self: there gives us a view of the highest, and most excellent images of goodness: which are more than tongue can signifie, or heart can conceive to be, and yet are in the divine Nature; and are manifested to us in all the distinct Works of the ever-blessed Trinity: the undeserv'd favours of a Creator, and Preserver, the unspeakable Consolations of a Comforter, the self-denying sufferings of a Saviour; who took on himself our flesh, and dyed in the flesh to save us.

Now of all this bottomless treasure of Eloquence, by which the riches of God's goodness are set off to us in holy Writ, this in my Text is one of the most affectionate words, and therefore it ought to be proportionably effectual on our practice. It is not onely *mercy*, but *forgiveness*. That with God, *in as much*, who is infinitely above us in power, was infinitely offended by our sins, with him however there is not onely a common favour, or a daily support of, or a continued bounty towards us; not onely gentleness to inferiours,

ours, or liberality to those that most need it, or beneficence to those that never merited it: but that with him there is *forgiveness*, peace with Enemies, reconciliation with Rebels, the requital of the freest grace for the highest provocations: that after all his other mercies of kindness had been so often abused by us, yet with him however still there is a mercy of pity, and commiseration: which as it is, in Heaven, the very Crown of all the blessed Attributes in the eternal power, and Godhead; so, upon Earth, it is the most God-like perfection, of which the heart of man is capable.

I will not attempt to reckon up an exact particular of all the divine mercies, and forgivenesses, for which we all stand engaged to the divine benignity. If they could be so soon reckon'd up, they were not so divine as they are. If they could be spread before us in one view, would it not be a severe objection, a just cause of sorrow to the best of us, to behold so immense a Catalogue of our obligations? whereof the far greater part is left wilfully uncancell'd by us, because of our ingratitude. And alas! doe what we our selves can, very much of it will be always *unpay'd* by reason of our inability.

Of

Of God's mercy to all his creatures, of his forgiveness moreover to Mankind, may not the same be truly affirm'd, that is of his presence? wherever he is, he is mercifull: he has matter to forgive; he is willing to forgive; and he is every where.

Which way soever we turn our thoughts, whether we regard the present life, or the future: whether we consider our selves as the Works of his hands, as we are men; or of his Grace, as we are Christians; or, as I may say, as the works of our own hands, as we are sinners: if we observe from how many terms of enmity, and distance God has freed us; with how many titles of nearness, and relation he has endear'd us: if we recollect, how absolute our dependence is upon him; how universal our receipts are from him: which way soever we look, his mercies are so far beyond our repaying by deeds, that they are far above our acknowledgment by words; nay beyond the very conceptions of our hearts. We may as well undertake to comprehend God himself, who is certainly incomprehensible. For among all the mercies, he bestows on the sons of men, one, and that the chief is, that as he forgives us our selves, so he gives us himself.

Yet though the mercies of God are so far beyond our recompencing, that, not onely our thanks, but we our selves are said to be *less than the least of them*: this does not at all acquit us of our duty: rather the greatest bonds are laid upon us thereby. We see the Psalmist does not onely here present us with a pleasant prospect, but with a serious view of God's mercies: he shews us, that we are therefore ty'd to some special, and irrevocable obligations.

And what to doe? what retribution to make? All benefits receiv'd should be answer'd by a greater requital, if possible, or by an equal, by an equal good will at least. Now for us men to think of making a greater, or an equal return to Heaven were impiety. How indeed can we, upon our own strength, hope to make any? since all the return, we can make to God, is of no value at all of it self: but onely according to the price, which his pity, not his justice, puts upon it.

Wherefore our most gracious Benefactor has prescribed the proportion of our requital, not at all according to the vastness of our receipts, but rather with respect to the scanty measure of our weak abilities, and that

that accepted by his grace, which is without measure. So that the very return of thanks for his mercies, which God has injoin'd us, is so manag'd by him, as to become a new degree of mercy to us. For the most perfect return of thanks, that God requires of us, and we can make, yet not without his help neither, is that which we of all things ought most to desire; and it is this in my Text, that because there is *mercy, and forgiveness with God*, therefore we should *fear* him; which is my second particular.

By *fear*, in this place, is not at all meant that, which the Philosopher describes to be passion of the Soul, by which men that are weaker strive to scape the force of the stronger, and to fly from all things, that have a power of doing them hurt. Not that *fear*. For so good men may, and ought to *fear* the Devil: so the Devils themselves do *fear* God, when they *believe, and tremble*. And so may the King's irreconcilable Enemies, who next to the Infernal Fiends, must be one of the vilest parts of the Creation, so may they always fear the punishment due to so horrid an impenitency.

Nor by fearing God is here intended any servile dread, or abject awe of his uncontrollable

trollable Dominion, and terrible Majesty; as he is the great Judge, and avenger of all sin. Not that *fear*. For so the damned spirits in Hell do fear God: whilst they suffer the extremity of his wrath for having rejected his mercy. So irreparably wretched is the condition of all wicked men, all Rebels against God, all that are impenitently so; and, I know not how, Rebellion is in this sense also as the sin of Witchcraft, that it is too generally accompanied with impenitency. Wherefore of such men, it is the peculiar curse, whilst they are in this world, that they shall *fear*, *where no fear is*. In the next world they shall *fear* too, but after another manner. There they shall have but too just a cause for *fear*, which they shall never be able either by strength, or art to avoid, or by intreaties to deprecate: though God himself had often before most passionately intreated them to avoid it.

Nor, lastly, by *fearing* God is here onely signified some blind reverence, or confused acknowledgment of his Omnipotence, as he is Sovereign Lord of the Universe. Neither this *fear*. For so a carnal man without grace (without real grace, I mean, not the counterfeite) so a man that *is without God*  
in



*in the world*, may, in some imperfect sense, fear God: may sometimes revere his power, may tremble at his thunder, may be somewhat startled at his apparent judgments, and melted a little by his undeserved mercies: and yet at last have no share in his forgiveness, nor in the *plenteous salvation*, that is with him, though it be never so *plenteous*.

But these are all narrow, ignoble, legal interpretations of *fearing* God. The *fear* in my Text, we find does onely proceed from a sense of God's *forgiveness*, and so can onely be found, in those whom he will forgive, whom he has forgiven. Wherefore the phrase is to be taken in the most comfortable, and Evangelical meaning. As the *fear of the Lord is the beginning*, and the perfection too of *all wisdom*: as it is most usually understood in the word of God, to comprize the principal acts of all true faith, devotion, and holiness; including the whole compass of all sincere, and undefiled Religion: such a fear of God, as will teach us to praise him openly, and worship him outwardly, so as to love him inwardly; and so as both inwardly, and outwardly to obey him: and all this most reasonably, because  
of

of the *mercy*, and *forgiveness* that is *with him*.

First, I say, to praise, and adore him publicly for his mercies. A work most becoming the Children of men. Of all the creatures, are not we most fitted for it, by reason of our greater mercies receiv'd? our greater capacities to understand, and declare our reception of them? And are we not therefore most obliged to it for the same reasons?

But if we should be, not onely so irreligious, but so unmanly as to neglect it, and be silent: if contrary to our very nature, we should look downward, and not rather upward, to *the day spring from on high, that has visited us*, yet still God has not left himself without witness: even all the other works of his hands, all ranks of Beings, all orders of the Creation, would proclaim the Providence, and make out the goodness of their Creatour.

Thus much do all the inferiour Creatures. And how infinitely is their account of mercies receiv'd short of ours? So short, that the greatest part of the Creation was not made so much to enjoy the mercies of God, and to be sensible of that enjoyment, as to be  
mercies



mercies to us. What heinous forgetfulness, and sin would it then be in us, when even the inanimate, and irrational beings, that were made for our sakes, shall all contribute to the praise of their Maker's bounty: if we alone shall be insensible of his bounty, or negligent of his praise; we, for whose sakes they were made, and for whose service they were ordained by him!

Wherefore the praising God for his mercy, for his forgiveness, is the peculiar duty of Mankind: As forgiveness is the proper act of his mercy to us. All other kinds of creatures never did partake of it. All below Mankind are not the proper object of it. All above us, as the Angels, when they offended, could never obtain it. With his praises then our hearts should be always full, our tongues often sounding.

But that is not all. The truest way of praising God is not onely perform'd by a bare praising him. It is indeed a pleasant thing to tell, how good, and gracious the Lord is. Yet it is not onely merely pleasant to tell. There is much work, and real labour, and diligent service, that must ensue. Though 'tis true that work it self, if rightly

perform'd, will be also pleasant in the end, and that *service a perfect freedom.*

However there is first much work required on our parts. Though the goodness of God is sweet in its Contemplation, yet it cannot be so to any purpose to us, except it produce in us answerable effects. Else the fruitless Contemplation of it were most uncomfortable. For it would the more accuse us of *neglecting so great a salvation.*

Wherefore most properly speaks my Text, *There is mercy with thee, that thou mayst be fear'd.* Mercy with God that he may be fear'd! why not rather that he may be loved? yes, that without all question. The mercies of God towards us, as they onely flow from his Love, so they ought to produce Love in us: yet not onely Love, but Fear: such a fear, as can never be divided from love; such a love, as is always join'd with a dread of offending, a jealousy of displeasing the person beloved; and such is a true Gospel-love; such is a true filial fear of God.

What I have said on the general part of my method propos'd, the *mercy*, and *forgiveness*, that is *with God*, and the principal reason

reason, why it is with him ; this, I have premised, as briefly as I could, in so weighty and copious an argument, as a necessary introduction, for th<sup>e</sup> applying my text to our selves, and to this glorious day of *mercy*, and *forgiveness*.

A day, of which, amongst its many other felicities, this is none of the least, that, do what we our selves could, not to deserve any more of these days ; do what our worst adversaries could, that we should have no more of them : yet neither our sins, nor their malice have prevail'd. But we are still met in the house of God ; in a Congregation of true, and dutifull Sons of the Church of *England* ; in the midst of this, His Majesty's always best-beloved, now I am sure, I may say, most deservedly beloved City : here we are met once again to solemnize this day ; and to doe it, as joyfully as we did at first ; nay more, if possible : Since now by the late defeat of the new Conspiracies of His Majesty's old, and new Enemies ; though it is prodigious he should have any new ones ; however now by the blessed prospect of Peace maintain'd, and Justice restored, and Rebellion once more destroy'd by its own arts ; now by the renew'd affec-

tions, and united acclamations of all good men from all quarters of the Land; by the joint consent of Heaven, and Earth: by the voice of God, and of the People; which we have been told is the voice of God: The voice not of the unruly tumult, and giddy populace, but of the good, loyal, and peaceably-dévout People, that is as the voice of God: and by all these methinks I am encouraged to call this day a new resurrection, as it were, of that great Nine and twentieth of *May*, and this year the very Restoration of the King's Restoration.

So perpetually fresh, and triumphant ought to be, and I may venture to presage, will be in all ages to come, the precious memory of this day: whereof it may be justly affirm'd, that except the general redemption of all Nations, on a day of all others the most memorable; that day, which was the fountain of all the good things we obtain'd on this, or any other day: but except that, on this day we had heap'd on us the greatest blessings, that perhaps ever any Nation under Heaven receiv'd from it on any one day.

To God alone be the glory of all. For  
what,

what, I beseech you, can be said less of a day, whose mercy was so diffusive, that it extended to its Enemies, as well as Friends? Laid good and sure foundations, if they, and we, had but built upon them, to make us, and them, and all that come after us happy, in all our great interests, whether temporal, or spiritual.

To you the ancient Friends, and well-wishers of this day, the old Loyal party I mean, for I doubt not but to many such I speak; you especially who endured the loss of your Countrey, in hope of returning on this day; you who so many years preferr'd an honourable Exile, before the enjoying such a Countrey without the King; To you, I will not say, this was a day of *mercy*, onely because you were restor'd to your estates, and possessions by it. Those you had sufficiently shewn, you never esteem'd as your chief goods: and therefore I will not reckon them as the principal blessings, you reapt on this day: But to you this was a mercy worthy of your perseverance in such a cause, to behold the King, and with the King, his, and your beloved Church of *England* restor'd. The Church, which was all  
the

the while your constant companion, your chief delight, and sometimes almost your onely comforter. This Church you beheld, on this day, decently re-establiſh'd in its own Temples, whose Tabernacle you had so long followed in the Wilderuess.

Thus was it to you a mercy. How much more was it so to those of us, who, by an unhappy fate, were either born or bred up in those miserable times; who had not the honour of such a Banishment abroad, but had the necessity of an inglorious Confinement home; how much, on all accounts to us, was this a day of mercy!

A day, which in exchange of an unlawfull yoke of Tyranny, and the worst of Tyrannies, imposed on us by our fellow Subjects: return'd to us the easie, and blessed Government of our Lawfull Prince. A day, that secur'd to us a lasting, safe, and innocent peace, not a false, or slavish peace, like that we had before, worse than the very state of War. A day, which gave us to know, what a true liberty of Conscience is instead of a Licentiousness. A day, which restor'd our King to his Rights, and Prerogatives, our Countrey to its Privileges and  
Laws;



Laws; for the false shews of which things it had so bitterly suffer'd.

But what need I prove that to you, and to us this was a day of mercy? when it was mercy, and forgiveness to its implacable Enemies.

To some of them it was the first innocent day of their whole lives. O! had it not been the last. To them it was a forgiveness on Earth of all their past crimes: and might have been so in Heaven too, if once they would but have learn't to be less familiar with God, and more to fear him. However to them it was a mercy, that it made them for a time quiet, and harmless, whether they would or no: that without their own personal ruine, it ruin'd their usurped Powers, which had render'd them so guilty towards God, so factious amongst themselves, so hated of all good men, and at last of all mankind.

But this one day most seasonably took from them the opportunities of destroying themselves, as well as us, by the numberless confusions, and phrensies of Enthusiastick zeal. This day gently deprived them of those wretched arms, by which they had been,

been so long successfull against truth, and the true Religion ; which to be is really the greatest of miseries.

Wherefore to the whole English Name, and Nation was this a day of mercy. By this day our age has been enrich'd with all the blessings of the right hand, and of the left. By this we were taught Precepts, and Examples sufficient to transmit those blessings entire to all posterity. By this the true cause of God, and of the Kingdom was for ever vindicated by divine Providence, against the false cause. By this divine Providence it self was vindicated: clear'd from the twenty years mischiefs, and desolations, which their deluded Authours were wont most arrogantly to impute to the special favour, and indulgence of divine Providence.

But on this day Sedition, and Rebellion in the State found, or should have found, its fatal period. Now it might have learn't, that although it may be, for a time, perniciously victorious, yet it can never be quietly settled in peace : that although God may sometimes in wrath permit, yet he never in kindness encourages prosperous wickedness.

In



In a word, on this day, Schism and Sacrilege in the Church were abundantly confounded, and should once for all have been convinc'd, that no real arm of flesh, which for a time they had, no counterfeited assistance of the Heavenly Spirit, which they pretended to, can alwayes, can long protect them against the true celestial arms of the unity, order, truth, and charity of the Church of *England*, the divine power of its piety, the invincible spirit of its Loyalty.

This therefore also is the day, which the Lord has made. He made it by his allwise counsel, by his outstretched arm; by a way indeed of all others, the most divine, by his counsel more than by his Arm. By the admirable conduct of a brave General, whose name shall ever flourish with this day. Yet not so much by his undaunted valour, or conquering hand, as by his deep wisdom, and peaceful arts. We admir'd the Heroick courage of his undertaking the design. But more, we loved, we blessed the calm prudence of its management, the easie gentleness of its execution. Scarce a sword

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all

all the while then drawn, amidst so many armies ; yet all contending for so much more than for one single victory. Scarce a drop of blood spilt, till Justice came to draw its sword, which too was sheath'd almost as soon as drawn. So it was fit, that a mild and peaceful Reign should be introduced only by the methods of mildness and peace.

We behold , my dear Brethren, how manifold was the mercy of God to us on this day.

If either the time, or your patience, or my voice would permit, 'twould be well worth our while to consider yet farther, by how many marvellous degrees of multiplied preservations, and unexpected protections of his Majesties Life, and Crowns, God has ever since taken care to guard, and defend his own gracious gift on this day, and now after four and twenty years, has deliver'd down to us the mercy of it safe, and secure, and even augmented.

Amongst many other instances of this kind never to be forgotten, if you would give me leave, there is one signal, and  
extraor-

extraordinary Providence, which being freshest in our memories, methinks cannot at this time, without injustice to God, and man, be wholly passed by in silence: I mean the most astonishing deliverance of the King, and Kingdom from the late horrid Conspiracy.

Heaven, and Earth knows, that the hellish design was spread into two most villainous enterprises: One, the subversion of the Kings Government, by an open insurrection against him in his politick capacity: The other, the Murder of his sacred person: which two, the Rebellious principles of the late Wars taught Rebels to distinguish in order to the destruction of both.

Of the Rebellion design'd; heats, stirs, as some have pleased to complement it: But of that no honest English man can either speak or think without extream detestation; if we either reflect on the plenty, and tranquillity we enjoy, and our Enemies would have overthrown; that we were and are the happiest people in *Europe*, did we but equally understand, and value our own happiness:

ness: or if we shall recollect, not only what we had lost, had the detestable Conspiracy succeeded, but also from whom, from what kind of Enemies we were deliver'd by its wonderful defeat.

Were they not either disciples of the very same ill parties, and Sects of men, or many of them the very same men, who had once before ruin'd us by the same popular pretences and ill applied names of things they never meant, of Liberty, Property, and Conscience?

For did we not all the while know the generality of the men themselves, to be Atheists in Religion, to whom nothing was sacred, who made all things profane? Monsters in morality, to whom nothing was unlawful, all things common? Republicans in opinion, to whom the easiest Laws of their own Country seem'd oppression, the mildest Monarchy in the world tyranny? Men whose black designs required them to be close, and hypocritical: but their Lives proved them to be loose, and debauch'd. Men either of desperate fortunes, or, which is worse, in plentiful fortunes, of desperate principles.

principles. Men fierce, cruel, Religiously cruel towards others, boldly irreligious themselves. Men whom Rebellion once prosperous had taught to be Rebellious, but Rebellion often forgiven could never teach them either gratitude, or quiet.

Such had been the blessed Reformers, and Restorers of your Liberties, and Laws, Priviledges, and Consciences, by the desperate insurrection intended, if God had not miraculously prevented it.

Of the other part of the diabolical Plot, the cruel Assassination of his Majesties, and his Royal Highnesses Persons, at the *Rye*; of that I know you cannot but on the one side, with the highest indignation; on the other, with an extasie of joy, acknowledge, that as all the most mysterious subtilties, and masterly strokes of hells malice were joyn'd in its secret contrivance: So the wisest, and most gracious arts, as I may call them, of the divine favour were visibly practiced in its disappointment.

Of the place, where this abominable Scene was laid, as many of you, as know it, must

must confess, that it was a spot of ground, the fittest in the whole world, for the attempting such an execrable parricide. A retyr'd passage out of the publick road; easie to be defended by those within, hard to be approach'd from without. A House solitary, and ruinous; a seat of melancholy, and horror: a fit Emblem of the furious intent of the wretched possessors mind.

There the anointed of the Lord had been taken in a snare. I could not have utterd these words, but that now I can say, the snare is broken, and we are escapt. There however had the best of Kings, the breath of our nostrils, been excluded from the assistance of his few Guards, whom the consciousness of his own innocence had made few; there, he passing by secure; as he might well think himself secure in the settled peace of all his other Dominions; secure in the company of a valiant, and invincible Brother sitting by his side; secure in the eminent Loyalty of that particular County; but above all, secure in his own unequal'd mercy to all his Enemies; to whom

whom he had done as much as King, or man could do to make them his Friends: However there had the King been on a sudden assaulted by unseen treacherous subjects, armed Villains, chosen Assassins, Veterans in mischief and slaughter, Men kept alive only by his forgiveness: Yet there exposed, defenceless, unarm'd, unforewarn'd, had the King — I can say no more, and God for ever be glorified, our enemies can say no more.

For then God from on high interposed. God had seen the whole preparation of the villany, he saw all their closest Cabals, and most daring resolutions. He saw them, and frown'd with disdain at the fury of their wrath: Smiled with contempt at the folly of their malice. God knew, when it was time for him to appear; when a Kings rescue would become a work worthy of Gods omnipotence.

He knew, and he appear'd, he appear'd in such a manner, as to make the glory of his immediate presence unquestionable, God wrought not then by the slow methods of his common providence:

not



Not then by bare natural signs, or obscure presages, or doubtful tokens of his pleasure: but by a flaming hand lift up on high, by a dreadful Fire: That being made the prodigious occasion of so great a mercy, which is otherwise esteem'd a dismal judgement.

That surprizing Fire of *New-Market* only chance, or negligence then seem'd to have kindled. But the event shews, it came from a higher, and a better cause. By that was the good King rouz'd on a sudden, driven first out of his own Lodgings, then by the smoak, and ashes of it pursued out of Town; so forc'd thence home to *Whitehall*, before his appointed time, and his Enemies black hour prefix'd.

Thus God conducted him hither safe, and untouch'd, passing just by that Same infamous *Rye*: which was then innocent, because then unprovided; that otherwise might have been the fatal womb of so many unspeakable mischiefs.

But hitherto, and for some months after, you may remember, the King suspected nothing of his danger: imagined nothing



nothing of his escape after he was escap'd: perceiv'd not as yet the heavenly protection that had cover'd his head, I will not say in the day of battel, but of his ordinary travelling, which might have proved to him more dangerous than the fiercest Battel. As yet, the wicked conspiracy was not dissolv'd, nor as yet were all their merciless hopes lost: The same wretches, tho somewhat struck with so great a disappointment, yet still met, and combin'd, still contrived new places, provided new weapons, sought out new opportunities to perpetrate the same deed. Still some of them thought, what one of them, the accursed *Ferguson* had impudence enough to say; that by this accident, the King was not so much delivered as reserved for some greater judgment.

When Lo! in the midst of our profound security, one of the cheif pattakers in the dire Conspiracy, being himself not suspected, not invited, not tempted by promises, not frighted by threatnings, but only those of his own conscience, then he in meer remorse, and dread of his guilt, came voluntarily in, and re-  
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vealed the hidden work of darkness.

And God soon seconded his own favour so well begun. By swift degrees, so many new discoveries were made: So many sensible concurring proofs strengthened each other: So many undeniable demonstrations of all circumstances confirm'd all: So many confessions of the principal, both living and dying Plotters broke forth: And they were plain confessions even when they were taught most to prevaricate, and most cunningly to equivocate: For of those impious arts the Jesuits are not now the only Masters: But so many, and so clear evidences did on a sudden surround and illustrate the whole matter of fact: One particularly, which I am loath to mention, and I cannot mention it but with pity as well as horror: that lamentable self Murder, I mean, which yet was a much stronger proof than many living witnesses could have been: All this, I say, meeting together, to convince the whole world of the reality of this Conspiracy: I dare now pronounce, that next the having a share in the detested Treason it self, the next crime is the not believing it. I mean the  
seeming

seeming not to believe it. For our Enemies themselves cannot but believe it. And most certainly, whoever shall now pretend not to believe that this Plot was real, it may justly be concluded, the the same men, at the same time, do desire it had taken but too real an effect. But I forbear.

We have heard what inestimable mercy there was with God for us; first by so miraculously giving us, and then in an equally miraculous course of Providence, by continuing to us the mercy of this day.

But to what purpose, think we, was all this mercy with God for us? Only that it might be thus faintly repeated, and imperfectly rejoiced in once a year? That cannot be sufficient. The greatest, and most durable end of this dayes mercy is undoubtedly the same, that we find in my Text to be the chief intention of all Gods mercies: that therefore the divine Majesty should be the more *fear'd*.

Indeed all Gods mercies do exact from us a suitable return of some kind of *fear*: Yet some more than others. Those his mercies, that flow gently down from Heaven, calmly falling on all our heads

every day, in blessed influences relating to this life, or the next, but without any great noise, or astonishing circumstances: They require all our Love, all our thanks, and some fear too mingled with them: A fear of vilifying them by neglect, or forfeiting them by abuse.

But such mercies, as these before us, preservations of Crown'd heads, and Royal Families, devastations of Kingdoms prevented, mighty Nations freed from slavery: these come, when they come upon us, with a greater force, and concussion of thoughts, and tho with a delightful, yet, give me leave to say it, with a formidable train of terrible delights. These mercies therefore; as they expect from us our equal love of God, so they may well demand our greater fear of him: more of our submission to his power, and of our reliance on his will; more of our adoration of his unsearchable counsels; and of our humble thankfulness for his declared goodness.

Thus most solemnly does this mercy call for our fear of God; according to all the interpretation of the Word: That we fear him so as to reverence him for all the

the secret degrees of ripening this mercy foregoing this day : that we fear him so as to bless him, for all the ensuing happy dayes we have ever since enjoy'd, as a consequence of this : That we fear him, so as to *stand in awe*, and so as to *sin no more* : That with a careful diligence, in our particular duties, with a zealous fear of God, with an unwearied vigilance over our selves, with a dutiful watchfulness for our King too in our several stations, we dread, and revere God for this, and all his other mercies, least we be forc'd to do so for his Judgments : Since the same God, who has thus bestow'd on us the greatest of mercies, is also able to inflict Judgments as great.

That is evidently one part of our duty rising from the contemplation of this dayes mercy, for this undeniable reason, we should all be induced not to disobey, or dishonour, but to *fear God*.

There is still behind another very considerable part of it, which respects God too, tho it seems more immediately to concern the King. It is, that the mercy of God on this day, the forgiveness which  
God.

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God put into the Kings heart, to be willing, into his hands to be able to dispense to all his Subjects; this should lead us all to *fear*, that is, in Scripture Language, to *honour the King*.

But this Doctrine, which else where is the most proper subject of this days solemnity, I thank God, in this Assembly, I need not spend time to enforce. Your known, and steady Loyalty has saved me that labour. Yet, what it were superfluous to advise the Kings friends, is, God knows, but too seasonable to wish his Enemies would do.

Let it therefore be the fervent, charitable prayer of us, and of all Loyal minds on this day: and true Loyalty is most generally accompanied with true Charity: That God at last would *turn* the Kings Enemies *hearts*, and so they shall be *turn'd*. From what, less than Gods mercy can we expect so great a change, since all the Kings mercy has not been able to effect it? But O! that now in this our day, their day too once it was, as properly as ours, and may be so again by their amendment: O! that now they  
would

would *mind the things, that belong to all our Peace.* O! that now they would understand, that the best, and only lawful way to preserve the Reformed Religion amongst us, is to defend it only its own way, and not by practising its very Enemies principles. O! that now they would reflect with grief on all their fresh contrivances against his Majesties Crown and Dignity: And if for no other, yet for this reason they would seriously repent of them, that the King was so ready to forgive all their old offenses, without so much as staying for their repentance. O! that now at length they would begin to fear the King for his mercy: Since amidst all his power hitherto, they have never had any other just cause imaginable to fear him. O! that henceforth they would forbear, upon any more pretences of Reforming the Church and State, to violate that Royal goodness, which when all was done, was next under God, only able to heal the breaches, and compose the distractions, they had caus'd once before under the disguise of such Re-formations.

God,



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God, of his infinite compassions grant, that they may be converted, and we unitedly, that without any other fear, but of God; and the King, we may serve God all the dayes of our lives; that we may long enjoy the Kings mercies, and they may have no more such need of his forgiveness, Amen.

**FINIS.**